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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *October* the 9th, 1755.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM,

SIR,

IT is with great pleaſure that I ſee you frequently doing juſtice to the age you live in, and not running into that vulgar and ill-natured prejudice, that the preſent times are worſe than the paſt. We are certainly better in every reſpect than our forefathers; and it is right we ſhould be told ſo, to encourage us in our progreſs towards the ſummit of perfection. I could give a thouſand inſtances of the virtues of theſe times; but ſhall at preſent content myſelf with one, which I do not remember that you have hitherto ſo much as touched upon. It is the extreme conſtancy and diſintereſtedneſs of the men, in affairs of love and marriage.

I AM a woman, Mr. Fitz-Adam, and have lately experienced this truth, in a degree that would bring upon me the imputation of ingratitude, if I neglected to do this public juſtice to the moſt conſtant and generous of all lovers.

IT is now upwards of a year ſince I received the addreſſes of this gentleman. He is a man of fortune and family; perfectly agreeable in his perſon; witty and engaging in his converſation; with a heart the moſt tender, and manners the moſt ſoft and amiable that can be imagined. Such as I have deſcribed him, you will not wonder that I gave him my whole heart, and waited with the utmoſt impatience to be united to him forever.

I WILL not give him a merit which he does not want, that of intending *my* happineſs only, and of raiſing me to a rank which neither my perſon nor fortune gave me any pretenſions to: on the contrary, I was young and handſome, and in the opinion of the world, one whoſe alliance could bring as much honour into my lover's family, as he could reflect on mine. Nor indeed did I ever wiſh that there ſhould be any ſuch obligation on either ſide; having generally obſerved that the moſt equal matches are the moſt productive of happineſs. But I only mention this circumſtance, as it may ſerve to do honour to his behaviour ſince.

THE time was now approaching, which was to make us inſeparably one. What his ſentiments were upon the occaſion, may be ſeen by the following letter, which among a thouſand of the ſame kind, I ſhall here tranſcribe.

" IT is as impoſſible for me to riſe, and not write " to my angel, as to lie down and not think of her. " I am too happy. Pray uſe me a little ill, that I may

" come

" come to a right ſtate of mind; for at preſent I can " neither eat nor ſleep: yet I am more good-humoured " than all the world; and then ſo compaſſionate, that " I pity every man I ſee. My deareſt loves only me, " and all other men muſt be miſerable. I wonder that " anybody can laugh beſides myſelf: if it be a man, he " makes me jealous: I fancy that he entertains hopes " of my charmer; for the world has nothing elſe in it " to make him cheerful.

" And now, my life! I have done with all my " doubts; the time approaches, that will change them " into happineſs. I know of nothing (ſickneſs and " death excepted) that can poſſibly prevent it. Our " pleaſures will lie in ſo narrow a compaſs, that we " ſhall always be within reach of them. To oblige " and be obliged will be all we want; and how ſweet " it is to think, that the buſineſs of our lives, and the " delight of our hearts, will be the ſame thing! I mean, " the making each other happy! But I am doomed to " be more obliged than I have power to oblige—— " What a wife am I to have! Indeed, my love, I ſhall " think myſelf the worſt, if I am not the very beſt of " all huſbands.

" *Adieu!*"

Upon my making a viſit of a few days to a friend near town, where I deſired him not to come, he wrote to me as follows.

" This lazy penny-poſt, how I hate it! It is two " tedious days that I muſt wait for an anſwer to what I " write. I will ſet up a poſt of my own, that ſhall " go and come every two hours; and then, upon con- " dition that I hear from you by every return of it, I " will obey your commands, and not think of ſeeing

" you,

" you. I wonder that you have not taken it into your " head to bid me live without breathing. But take care, " my love, that you never give up the power you have " over me: for if ever it comes to my turn to reign, I " will be revenged on you without mercy. I will load " you ſo with love and kind offices, that your little " heart ſhall almoſt break, in ſtruggling how to be grate- " ful. I will be tormenting you every day, and all " day long. I will prevent your very wiſhes. Even " the poor comfort of hope ſhall be denied you; for you " ſhall know that none of your to-morrows ſhall be " happier to you than your yeſterdays. Your pride too " ſhall be mortified; for I will out-love you, and be " kinder to you, than you can poſſibly be to me. All " theſe miſeries you ſhall ſuffer, and yet never be able " to wiſh for death to relieve you from them. So if " you have a mind to avoid my cruelties, reſolve not to " marry me; for I am a tyrant in my nature, and will " execute all I have threatened."

How tender and obliging were theſe expreſſions! I own to you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that I anſwered them all, in an equal ſtrain of fondneſs. But in the midſt of this ſweet intercourſe, he was unhappily taken ill of the ſmall pox. The moment he was ſenſible of his diſtemper, he conjured me in a letter not to come near him, leſt his apprehenſions for me (as I had never had it) ſhould prove more fatal to him than the diſeaſe. It was indeed of the moſt dangerous kind: but how was it poſſible for me to keep from him? I flew to him when he was at the worſt, and would not leave him, till they took me away by force. The conſequence of this viſit was, that I caught the infection, and ſickened the next day. My diſtemper was of the confluent ſort, and much worſe than my lover's, who in leſs than three weeks was in a

condition

condition to return my viſit. He had ſent almoſt every hour in the day to enquire how I did; and when he ſaw me out of danger (though totally altered from my former ſelf) his tranſports were not to be told or imagined. I cannot reſiſt the pleaſure of tranſcribing the letter that he ſent me at his return home that evening.

" What language ſhall I invent to tell the charmer of " my ſoul how happy this viſit has made me! To ſee " you reſtored to health was my heart's only wiſh; nor " can my eyes behold a change in that face (if they " can be ſenſible of any change) that will not endear it " to me beyond the power of beauty. Every trace of " that cruel diſtemper will be conſidered by me as a love- " mark, that will forever revive in my ſoul the ideas of " that kindneſs by which it came. Lament not a " change then, that makes you lovelier to me than ever: " for till your ſoul changes (which can never happen) " I will be only and all

" *Yours.*"

THIS letter, and a thouſand repetitions of the ſame engaging language, made me look upon the loſs of my beauty, as a trivial loſs. But the time was not yet come, that was to ſhew me this generous and diſintereſted lover in the moſt amiable of all lights. My father, whoſe only child I was, and who had engaged to give me a large fortune at my marriage, and the whole of his eſtate at his death, fell ill ſoon after; and to the ſurprize of all the world, died greatly involved, and left me without a ſhilling to my portion.

MY lover was in the country, when I acquainted him with this fatal news. Indeed I had no doubt of his generoſity; but how like a divinity he appeared to me, when by the return of the poſt, he ſent me the following letter!

" THINK